

Guidelines for Working with Youth, Families, and Communities for Sexual Violence Prevention

Evidence suggests that positive influences in youth development contribute to lower rates of youth-reported risky behaviors, including violence. Therefore, sexual violence prevention initiatives should include a youth development focus. However, prevention initiatives for youth must go beyond working with and empowering youth. You must also implement prevention strategies with adults and community institutions to foster the positive influences and ensure accountability for thriving youth. The principles below can help plan, implement, and evaluate prevention strategies for youth, their families, and communities in efforts to end sexual violence.

Principle	Description
Focus on primary prevention	Primary prevention is any action, strategy or policy that prevents sexual violence from initially occurring . Examples of primary prevention strategies include working with men and boys to confront norms of masculinity, promoting the positive development of youth through asset building at individual and community levels, and organizational policies on responding to sexualized bullying.
Use a comprehensive approach	<p>Taking a comprehensive approach includes working at all levels of the social ecological model. For example, a school-based curriculum to build bystander skills and explore healthy, respectful relationships for a group of 8th graders is working to influence the student (Individual) as the curriculum works to change individual knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. A multi-session pilot program for a boys basketball team to identify and change peer group norms that are supportive of sexual harassment is working to change relationship level risk factors. Although these are both set in a school, the change doesn't occur school-wide as the culture of the school has not been addressed as change is being pursued one person at a time through the curriculum. A school working group that is trying to change the policies and procedures of the school to change its climate and environment concerning acceptance of violence as a norm and honoring and modeling respect and positive interactions is a Community level change that will also support change in individual behavior. To reinforce these messages outside of school settings the local rape crisis center is embarking on a community-wide initiative that includes a focus on promoting healthy relationship norms to influence societal level change.</p> <p>Additionally, all activities should be culturally competent, use a variety of teaching methods, be grounded in behavior change theory and have multiple sessions with follow-up booster sessions.</p>

Promote a positive approach	In addition to prevention strategies that aim to reduce risk factors for perpetration and victimization it is essential that we expand our portfolio to include “progressive prevention” – promoting the behaviors you want youth and adults to adopt. Asset building, or positive youth development, can and should occur on an individual, relationship and community level with all sectors working toward a common vision of a healthy community that supports the positive development of youth.
Build relationships	The principle of relationship building comes into play at two levels. The first level is building collaborative relationships among youth serving agencies and other key partners to effectively advance a shared vision of healthy youth development to prevent sexual violence. The second level is implementing prevention strategies that promote caring connections between youth and their peers; youth and their families; youth and other adults; and youth and the agencies that serve them.
Assess capacity and readiness	As you develop your program plan or logic model you will also need to assess the capacity and readiness of both your own organization and the individuals/organizations/community you plan to work. Assessments may include staff capacity and training opportunities and organizational and/or community commitment to prevention.
Continuous quality improvement through evaluation	Evaluation is essential to knowing if our prevention strategies and programs are achieving the results we intended. Taking a continuous quality improvement approach allows you to have ongoing feedback on the implementation process to make it more likely you’ll achieve positive outcomes by making any adjustments needed as you implement in order to stay on target. Your evaluation plan should also match your logic model and measure the desired outcomes of the strategy or program.

Guidelines for Training Professionals for Sexual Violence Prevention

RPE grantees do not have enough resources, time or avenues to reach everyone. By training other professionals to incorporate sexual violence prevention into their existing work we dramatically increase the breadth of our impact. Other professionals have influence and opportunities to promote protective factors and reduce risk factors within their own constituencies. For the purposes of these guidelines we will define training as lasting improvement of behavior on the job. Training is skills focused and organizationally grounded. This is different from imparting knowledge (e.g. talking with policy makers about sexual violence and the importance of prevention or giving a presentation to the Kiwanis Club on sexual assault). We will also focus on the concept of “learning” – the process by which behavior changes result from experiences.

Principle	Description
Develop a comprehensive training plan	Involve learners and other partners in collaboratively creating a training plan that includes development of a logic model, goals and objectives and an evaluation process. The following principles should also be considered in the planning process.
Strategize about “who” to train	Training takes a significant investment of time and resources on both the part of the training organization and the learners. While “everyone” has a role in preventing sexual violence it is not realistic or feasible for RPE grantees to train “everyone.” Consider the following: what group of professionals or organizations are aligned with the mission of your organization or have identified preventing violence as a part of their mission; who you have existing prevention-related relationships with; readiness of individuals and organizations to become partners in prevention; and levers for change in your state/community.
Identify the broader context of learning application/practice	The individuals you train will take new skills/behavior back to their workplaces. Their worksites, professional requirements and norms of practice need to be supportive of applying the new skills/behaviors otherwise they will not be put into practice. Assessing the learners’ work environment (e.g. professional requirements; relevant organizational policies, procedures and/or regulatory factors; and social/cultural norms of the learners’ practice community) is an essential precursor to training. You may have to do some work ‘preparing the way’ prior to the actual training in order for the learners to be able to apply what they learn when back in their work environment.
Use sufficient dosage	One time trainings are not sufficient to change behavior. Consider the value of “saturation vs. sprinkling.” For example, rather than conducting 6 three hour trainings to 6 different groups

	(sprinkling); look instead to conduct 2 day-long trainings with 6 months of follow-up technical assistance for 2 different groups (saturation). The second is more time intensive for the trainer and requires a greater degree of commitment from the learner and the learners' organization but the likelihood of sustained practice change is greater.
Use multiple educational strategies	Effective training practices include employing principles of adult learning in the design and implementation of training and using multiple strategies (e.g. train-the-trainer or self directed learning) to address different learning orientations (i.e. behaviorist, cognitivist, humanist, social learning, constructivist) .
Design culturally relevant training	Just as prevention messages cannot have 'one size fits all' approach neither can training. For training to be pertinent to the learners the design and content all need to be culturally relevant. Work with appropriate partners to develop and implement the training so that it is culturally relevant.
Select appropriate trainers	Select trainers who have credibility with the learners. Experience, profession, position and language are all factors that increase credibility. Additionally, trainers should be culturally competent and grounded in primary prevention. A team approach can balance skills and cultural considerations. Consider using consultants if your agency does not have the internal resources or staff.
Consider the multiple paths of how training moves into practice	Your ultimate goal in training other professionals is for them to incorporate primary prevention strategies into their practice. Given that, HOW training moves into practice needs to be incorporated into the design of your training and follow-up technical assistance. Transfer, diffusion or application theory should be utilized for this (more information on these theories is forthcoming).
Train for sustainability	In keeping with the ecological model, training must go beyond the individual level. If the individuals you train leave the organization they take that capacity with them. Incorporating multiple levels of staff (e.g. management and line staff) and building organizational capacity support sustainable behavior/practice change.
Provide follow-up technical assistance	Follow-up technical assistance is a key component of effective training practice. Support individual and organizational integration of new skills/behaviors through mentoring, coaching, "on call" trainers and practicums.

Guidelines for Coalition Building for Sexual Violence Prevention	
A coalition is a group of individuals and/or organizations that come together with a common interest and agree to work together for a common goal. Coalitions are the cornerstones of creating successful change within a community. A well-organized, broad based coalition can be more successful than a single agency in creating policy change, increasing public knowledge, and developing innovative solutions to complex problems.	
Principle	Description
Engage a broad spectrum of the community	The coalition should reflect the community it serves. Coalition membership can include persons who reside and/or work in the community; persons who understand the complexities of sexual violence; persons who understand and value primary prevention; persons who are willing and able to work for social change; and persons who can represent the voice as well as the assets and needs of the underserved and unserved in the community.
Build on community strengths	Community assets are the starting point of any change. Instead of focusing solely on the needs – more money, more publicity, better legislation – also look at existing assets – volunteer organizations; colleges and universities; empowered youth; faith-based organizations, etc.
Jointly develop a shared and compelling vision and purpose	Develop a clear mission, vision, and goals that accurately reflect the social change that is to occur. This will keep coalition members grounded and focused on the purpose.
Encourage true collaboration as the form of exchange	True collaboration refers to exchanging information, modifying activities, sharing resources, and <i>enhancing the capacity of another</i> for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose by <i>sharing risks, resources, responsibilities, and rewards</i> . Collaboration goes beyond communication and coordination among agencies and individuals.
Practice democracy	The coalition-building process will rely on active citizenship and empowered community members who have voice to make social change happen.
Employ an ecological approach that emphasizes the individual in his/her own setting.	The coalition should partner with community members to identify what sexual violence prevention strategies work and which ones don't work; engage community members to identify assets for doing the work, and identify needs that should be addressed with resources and capacity-building.

Take action	Go beyond planning. Coalitions that fail to take action lose the energy and engagement of their membership. Implement your action plan and maintain momentum. Coalitions don't run programs. If the coalition develops a program spin it off - institutionalize it in an organization. Also part of taking action is celebrating the coalition's successes!
Align the goal and the process	The coalition-building process should reflect the same principles, values, and outcomes that you're working toward. If you want to be a community that promotes peace and conflict resolution then the coalition process needs to model this. "Be the change you wish to create in the world." (M. Gandhi)

Guidelines for Mobilizing Communities for Sexual Violence Prevention

Community mobilization facilitates shifting ownership for the **solution** to the community to impact the complex interplay of factors that contribute to sexual violence. Today, rape crisis centers and other anti-violence community based organizations are largely part of the social service sector. Incorporating community mobilizing initiatives into prevention efforts brings us back to the anti-rape movement's roots as a social change movement. Building the capacity of communities to prevent sexual violence increases the potential for lasting, substantive change at an individual **and** community level.

Principle	Description
Commit resources to increase community engagement	Community engagement requires resources and flexibility. Resources are typically needed to meet the community where it is. There may be a need to provide food and child care, and offer incentives to keep community residents involved. There may be a need to offer mini-grants for grass-roots organizing, or scholarships and transportation tokens to attend meetings. Planning helps to determine what resources are available and how they can be utilized.
Involve grassroots leaders and organizations	Grassroots leaders and organizations are often gatekeepers to the community. They can help you understand the political and social landscape in a community and connect you with community members. Additionally, working with grassroots leaders and organizers helps promote community ownership and build local leadership.
Empower communities to make social change	Community mobilization involves supporting and facilitating community members' assessment of the problem of sexual violence in their community, identifying the underlying conditions that promote sexual violence, and developing community-based sustainable solutions to the problem.
Outreach	Outreach involves being in the community – listening to community residents, going to community schools, eating in community restaurants, going to other community meetings in order to connect with community members who are not actively involved in community issues and efforts.
Match facilitator/organizer with audience for credibility	An objective but caring facilitator should be utilized to help build consensus for decision-making. However, in order to build consensus, the facilitator must be able to relate well to the community members, respecting and valuing their contribution to the solutions. Ideally, your facilitator is a member from the community.

Assets based approach	Community members typically know what's happening in their community – what their strengths and resources are. Starting where the community is and building on existing assets helps to foster a spirit of efficacy and support for the change.
Accountability	It is important to define the roles and responsibilities of the facilitator and community members, as well as measures of success, to ensure that what was expected to happen actually does happen and that everyone contributes as expected. The facilitator/organizer is accountable to the community and community members are accountable to each other.
Sustainability	Sustainability is more than continued funding. Sustainability is the institutionalization of program and policy changes, community ownership and capacity as well as resources to sustain the work. A plan for sustainability should be addressed at the beginning of the process.
Promote Collaborative Leadership	Collaborative leadership is based on the practice of shared decision making. Skills for collaborative leadership include promoting inclusiveness and diversity; resolving conflicts constructively; and communicating clearly, openly and honestly. The community mobilization process should foster and nurture new leadership in others and encourage top-level commitment.

Guidelines for Developing and Supporting Public and Organizational Policies for Sexual Violence Prevention

Sometimes the best way to address a problem or issue is to develop and implement a new (or better) policy. Public policies establish and support priorities and allocate resources to address issues and problems. Organizational policies establish expectations of conduct and practice for individuals and also establish an organizational climate in which the mission and goals of the agency are fulfilled. To affect public or organizational policy, the issue must be brought to key decision makers' attention, a policy to address it must be adopted and then put into practice, and the results must be evaluated to see if the policy made a difference. Both public and organizational policies can lead to norms change and have a broad impact. In some cases, laws and policies already exist that could protect public health and safety, but an additional law, change in policy, better enforcement, or change in an organization's practices may be necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Examples of sexual violence prevention policies include: 1) school policies designed to change norms and behaviors that influence perpetration; 2) public policies that fund comprehensive programs for youth at risk for perpetration; 3) licensing policies that mandate sexual violence prevention training for social workers, health professionals, youth workers, child care workers, etc; 4) organizational policies that commit resources to sustainable sexual violence prevention strategies such as staff training, coalition building, and community organizing; and 5) workplace policies that enforce sexual harassment penalties and foster a professional and safe working environment.

Principle	Description
Use policy as a part of your state's comprehensive approach to ending sexual violence.	From an ecological perspective, developing, refining and/or responding to policy is typically considered a societal level activity (even if it is state or local policy) and is an essential gateway to instituting changes in individual, relationship and community norms and behaviors. While policy initiatives have been key to the success of many public health campaigns, it has also been a major tool to gain needed resources and funding. Efforts to promote prevention with policy makers and organizational leadership can increase community/agency support for prevention and lead to a wider constituency for state partnerships and community engagement.
Understand roles of policy	A key role of policy work in sexual violence prevention is to promote individual, community, or organizational norms, behaviors, and practices that influence the circumstances or environments in which sexual violence occurs. Thus, policy work can include both organizational policy and public policy. Organizational policies establish expectations of conduct and practice for individuals and also establish an organizational climate in which the mission and goals of the agency are fulfilled. Executive leadership, management, and executive boards play key roles in enforcing and monitoring organizational policies and can allocate resources that promote the

	<p>strategies of sexual violence prevention. For sustainable implementation, staff, clients, and community are engaged in establishing, creating and managing the policies.</p> <p>Public policies establish and support priorities and allocate resources to address issues and problems within local communities, municipalities, townships, or counties, as well as states, commonwealths, territories, and the country-at-large. Educating local policy makers can help raise sexual violence prevention as a priority for the community and also change individual community norms and behaviors that contribute to the occurrence of sexual violence. In many instances policy initiation/changes at the community, city, or county level can provide a groundswell of support that eventually leads to state and national policy adoption.</p>
<p>Do policy work in coalition. Utilize best practices in coalition-building (see guidelines for coalition building).</p>	<p>It's more difficult to advance policy when there is only one lone voice promoting it. Allies or a coalition can provide needed diversity of voices, resources and commitment to support the different phases of policy development work. An existing coalition might be ready and willing to work with you on an issue, or you might have to convene traditional partners with new, non-traditional partners. Collaborative leadership and consensus-building skills are key to developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policy initiatives. A note of caution -- be strategic about who you invite on board. Assess the various potential stakeholders' history, values, and mission with respect to establishing the change you are pursuing. It is also critical to assess potential stakeholders interests and capacity to move toward the proposed goals and to establish common ground across a diversity of perspectives without adversely impacting the coalition's progress.</p>
<p>Organize for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. proactive advancement to promote new policy initiatives 2. reactive response to refine and improve current policy 3. defensive response to block institution of problematic policy 	<p>Organizing your coalition or stakeholders to develop and promote a new policy might require different strategies than organizing a coalition or stakeholders to refine/change an existing policy or responding to newly introduced policy. While both can benefit from a grassroots approach, new policy development involves a longer, more comprehensive process with an intensive focus on planning and implementation strategies. Responding to an existing or proposed policy often requires a quick but thorough review of the history of the policy; who developed and promoted the policy and understanding the intended and unintended consequences of the policy. Understanding the best partners to serve in either capacity can impact your success.</p>

Design an approach (pre-policy development planning)	<p>Before developing a policy, it is important for collaborative partners to plan or design their approach. These activities could include: coordinating leadership; understanding the issue; developing a shared vision and course of action; determining if policy is indeed the best strategy to address the issue, and if it is, establishing policy objectives. Key activities to understand the issue include conducting stakeholder interviews, reviewing data, exploring the political climate, and researching related norms, risk and protective factors. Understanding the individual, community, and/or agency behaviors that will be impacted by the policy can help with establishing policy objectives (and what will constitute success).</p>
Focus on how to advance your policy; study the opposition (policy development and implementation)	<p>As policy development is done in coalition, remember to engage stakeholders or community members who can help advance the policy, as well as those who can potentially block the policy. Shared leadership and if feasible, an experienced facilitator, can help facilitate consensus building on policy content and expected impact. Additionally, policy development can include establishing a criteria for “good” policy around an issue (i.e., no unfunded mandates). At this step, sequencing or flow charting system changes can be helpful to maximize effectiveness of the policy as well as looking for unintended consequences. It is also important to continue to work on what evaluation criteria will be used to determine if the policy initiative is successful.</p> <p>Implementing policy involves an advocacy process and educating policy makers. Experienced professionals might be helpful with identifying key policy makers or gatekeepers to policy makers, and might also be helpful with navigating the political system both in state and local governmental systems and in organizational leadership.</p>
Be a “watchdog” (monitoring, enforcing, and evaluating policy)	<p>Evaluating and monitoring the policy helps policy developers understand if the policy was implemented as intended; if it is deemed “successful” as projected in the pre-planning and policy development stages; if there are unintended consequences that need addressing; and what improvements can be made to sustain the impact of the policy. Establishing monitors/enforcers or “watchdogs” can be a tool for engaging stakeholders and keeping the issue a priority in the community.</p>